

WHAT'S *New*

in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors,
and workers in the District of Columbia*

Friday, September 2, 2005

CRIME DECLINES SLIGHTLY IN AUGUST; DOWN 11 PERCENT FOR THE YEAR

The number of serious crimes reported in DC declined slightly during the month of August, according to preliminary statistics compiled by the MPDC. Through the first eight months of the year, preliminary data show an 11 percent reduction in serious crime. When compared with August 2004, the District last month recorded decreases in sexual assaults (-12%), assaults with a deadly weapon (-6%), burglaries (-20%) and thefts from auto (-13%). However, these reductions were essentially offset by statistical increases in homicides (+12%), robberies (+14%), thefts (+8%) and auto thefts (+11%). The number of arson offenses remained unchanged. In all, 2,928 serious (or "Index") crimes were reported during August 2005, down about 1 percent from the 2,945 offenses reported in August 2004, according to preliminary figures. Four of the seven police districts recorded decreases in crime during August. So far this year, the preliminary data show decreases in all nine major crime categories, including a 21 percent drop in stolen autos, a 16 percent reduction in burglaries, and a decline of 14 percent in sexual assaults. When comparing the first eight months of 2005 with the same time period of 2004, all seven police districts are showing decreases in crime. The Sixth District has a 16 percent reduction, followed by the First and Second districts, where crime is down 12 percent.

① View the latest preliminary crime data for the seven police districts and the city as a whole at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1239,q,543329.asp>

① For tips and resources on how to protect yourself and your property from crime, visit:
http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1237,q,542013,mpdcNav_GID,1523,mpdcNav,1,asp

OFFICIALS WARN AGAINST POTENTIAL CHARITY FRAUD IN THE WAKE OF HURRICANE KATRINA

Even in the face of almost unimaginable tragedy, officials are warning residents to be wary of unscrupulous and fraudulent "charities" that may seek donations for the victims of Hurricane Katrina. "Unfortunately, there are people who will not hesitate to take advantage of the kind and giving nature of those wishing to lend a helping hand to those affected by Hurricane Katrina," said DC Attorney General Robert J. Spagnoletti. He and others advise that people should confirm that the charity to which they intend to donate money is reputable. Avoid any "charity" that accepts donations in cash only. And be wary of unfamiliar websites that may be soliciting online. The AG's Office notes that there are a few simple precautions that consumers can take to protect themselves and to make sure their donations reach Katrina victims. First, when an online message containing a request for donations appears, do not respond unless you are certain it is valid. Use the Better Business Bureau's guidelines on how to evaluate solicitations before you send money or give out your credit card number. And always validate the relief fund or charity through a known reliable entity.

① DC residents who suspect they have been approached or duped by an unscrupulous charity are encouraged to contact the AG's Consumer Protection Hotline at (202) 442-9828, or online at:
<http://app.occ.dc.gov/services/complaint.asp>

① FEMA has a list of reputable disaster relief resources for Hurricane Katrina on its website at:
<http://www.fema.gov/press/2005/katrinadonations.shtml>

① The Federal Trade Commission offers guidelines on best practices for charitable donations at:
<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/misc/charitycheck.htm>

MPDC WELCOMES 28 NEW POLICE OFFICERS, WHO ARE NOW HEADED FOR NEIGHBORHOOD PATROLS

As part of its continuing efforts to maintain enhanced police patrols in DC neighborhoods, the MPDC welcomed 28 new officers who were sworn in during graduation ceremonies Friday afternoon. The new officers – members of Recruit Classes 2005-1 and 2005-2 – have successfully completed approximately 24 weeks of training at the Maurice T. Turner Jr., Institute of Police Science, the MPDC's training academy. All of the officers are being assigned to neighborhood patrol duties in the Police Service Areas (PSAs). The new officers are part of the Police Department's ongoing efforts to maintain its sworn force at or near its fully authorized level of 3,800. Executive Assistant Chief Michael Fitzgerald told the new officers that, as members of the MPDC, they will face incredible challenges and intense scrutiny, as they handle the diverse responsibilities of policing in the Nation's Capital: neighborhood crime, domestic security, demonstrations (including a major anti-war rally planned for September 24) and the protection of Constitutional rights. "As much as national and international events will always affect our city and our Police Department, I ask you to always keep something in mind," Fitzgerald said. "The number one priority of the Metropolitan Police Department is the safety of our residents – the people who call the District of Columbia their home. That is true today, and it will be true each and every day of your careers," he added.

REWARD OFFERED FOLLOWING SERIES OF HOTEL ROBBERIES IN NORTHWEST

Over the past several months a number of robberies of hotels have taken place in the Northwest quadrant of DC. In several of these robberies, the suspect is generally described as a black male, 24 to 30 years old, 6' to 6'4" tall and wearing dark clothing. MPDC detectives are investigating to determine if the same individual is responsible for a number of these robberies. The Hotel Association of Washington, DC is assisting the police by now offering a reward of up to \$25,000 to anyone who provides information that leads to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for these robberies. Anyone with information about these cases is asked to call police at (202) 727-9099. Anyone wishing to remain anonymous may provide a seven-digit number to the call taker. The reward offer stands for the next five months and may be divided among claimants.

NEWS & NOTES

Talk with Chief Ramsey. Chief Ramsey discusses public safety issues and takes phone calls during two upcoming media appearances: from 4-5 pm on Wednesday, September 7, on News Channel 8; and from 10-11 am on Thursday, September 8, on WTOP Radio's "Ask the Chief" program.

Youth Fest 2005. The MPDC's Third District Substation, in association with the Capitol City Pavilion, the Columbia Heights Association, the National Urban League and others, are sponsoring Youth Fest 2005: A Day of Peace, on Saturday, September 10. The event, which includes three local bands and a fashion show, runs from noon to 6 pm at the Capitol City Pavilion on Georgia Avenue, NW. Details at <http://app.mpdcc.gov/newsroom/newsroom.asp?sid=138000>.

Earlier Weeknight Curfew in DC. The MPDC reminds young people and their families that DC's teen curfew now begins an hour earlier on weeknights. From now through next June, curfew for young people under the age of 17 begins at 11 pm on Sunday through Thursday nights, and continues until 6 am the following day. On weekend nights, curfew begins at 12:01 am, and ends at 6 the next morning. Details at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/curfew>.

① For information on career opportunities in the MPDC – both sworn and civilian – visit:

http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1230,q,537771,mpdcNav_GID,1523,mpdcNav_|31417|.asp

① The MPDC offers rewards of up to \$25,000 for information leading to an arrest and conviction in any unsolved homicide in DC. And the Crime Solvers program provides up to \$1,000 for information leading to an arrest and indictment in other serious crimes. For more information, visit:

http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1243,q,544785,mpdcNav_GID,1523,mpdcNav_|.asp

DATA BOX

Homicides	as of 9/2/05
◆ 2005: 128	
◆ 2004: 129	
◆ % Change: -0.8%	
◆ Closure Rate: 52.3% (67 closures)	
Adult Arrests	week end. 8/27/05
◆ Total: 1,109	
◆ Drugs: 193	
◆ Weapons: 11	
◆ Motor Vehicle Theft: 13	
◆ Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 45	
Juvenile Activity	week end. 8/27/05
◆ Arrests: 45	
◆ Curfew Violations: 132	
◆ Truants: 0	
Firearm Recoveries	as of 8/27/05
◆ August: 206	
◆ 2005 Total: 1,593	
Traffic Fatalities	as of 9/2/05
◆ 2005: 27	
◆ 2004: 36	
◆ % Change: -25.0%	

Information, ideas, or comments about this service? Send an e-mail to **KEVIN MORISON**, MPDC's Director of Corporate Communications, at kevin.morison@dc.gov. Would you like to have this information e-mailed to you? Just go to our Website and register with **Crimereports.com**.

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